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ANCIENT AND MODERN TESTIMONIES TO SPIRITUALISM'

BY A TRUTH SEEKER.

VIII.

Dr. Whitby observes, "It seems evident that at the first foundation of a christian church among the Gentiles, there were no settled pastors to perform the public offices in their assemblies; but they were generally performed by spiritual men who had the gift of prophecy, or were in the assembly excited to that work by an afflatus of the Holy Spirit. * * * For the continuance of this gift of prophecy, not only in the age of the apostles, but in several succeeding ones, we have sufficient evidence from the best writers." The learned Dodwell, who has very fully and temperately discussed this question, considers himself to have "proved that extraordinary prophetic gifts were given to others than the Apostles; not only in the first and second centuries, but even in the third, down to the times of Constantine. All orders of men, and even women, had these gifts, especially those who had any eminence in the church. Church office and dignity was regulated by the measure of these gifts—neither were there any public duties of the church foreign to the prophetic office. The blessing pronounced and implored over the sacramental elements was uttered not by a stated minister; but by whomsoever among the congregation the prophetic power fell upon, thus moving him to the consecration of the sacrament." So also with regard to ordination of pastors, "When the names of men to be appointed for pastors were, after an examination, proposed to the church, and solemn fasting and prayer were on the occasion used, the prophets expressed their sentence; not that of any certain or prepared persons, but according to the free pleasure of the prophetic spirit; sometimes by the mouth of children; sometimes of grown persons;

just as at the time the power of the spirit of prophecy impelled them." These extracts may serve to shew the high estimation in which these spiritual gifts, or manifestations were held by the primitive christians. Dr. Mosheim, the Church Historian, thus testifies to their usefulness. Writing of the second century, he says, "It is easier to conceive than to express how much the miraculous powers and extraordinary gifts which the christians exercised on various occasions, contributed to extend the limits of the church. The gift of foreign tongues seems to have gradually ceased as soon as many nations became enlightened with the truth, and numerous churches of christians were everywhere established, for it became less necessary than it was at first. But the other gifts with which God favoured the rising church of Christ were, as we learn from numerous testimonies of the ancients, still conferred upon particular persons here and there."

Of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, the Rev. Wm. Fishbough, observes, "The Epistles of Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and the Shepherd of Hemas were read in public religious assemblies for four hundred years after Christ, and though they were not generally received into the Canon of the New Testament, they were considered as possessing an intrinsic value little inferior to that of the apostolic writings themselves. The claims and teachings of these productions, therefore, must have received the *fullest sanction* in the Churches during that period; and among the very prominent claims and teachings of at least *several* of them, was that which set forth in a very prominent light the doctrine of an existing and post-apostolic spiritual communication." Speaking of the epistles of St. Ignatius "the immediate disciple and personal associate of the beloved St. John," and appointed by him Bishop of Antioch, the same writer observes, "Several of them were composed just before his martyrdom, and in full prospect of that event, which happened in the year 106, or, as some authorities have it, in the year 117. They are written in a most pure and loving spirit, and everywhere seem to take an existing inspiration for granted, the author claiming the same for himself as will be seen particularly from his Epistle to the Philadelphians, ch. ii. 11 — 15, where he incidentally refers to an instance in which the spirit came upon him, causing him to speak involuntarily, exactly in the manner of some modern mediums, and toutter warnings appropriate to circumstances he knew not of as a man." Ignatius was condemned to be exposed to the fury of the wild beasts in the theatre for professing the christian faith; some of his friends who accompanied him on his journey from Antioch to Rome, wrote an account of his journey and martyrdom, and among other remarkable declarations, make the following: — they say "The night after his (Ignatius) suffering, we were together watching in prayer, that God would vouchsafe to us some assurance of what had passed; whereupon several of the company fell into a slumber and therein *saw visions wherein Ignatius was represented*; for which, when we had conferred together, we glorified God the giver all good things, being thereby assured of his blessedness." Here we have express and distinct testimony to the existence of inspiration and spiritual vision in the immediate post-Apostolic Age. St. Polycarp, also the personal acquaintance and disciple of the beloved Apostle, and appointed by him Bishop of Smyrna, suffered martyrdom at an extreme old age in the year 147.

From the circular letter addressed by the church of Smyrna to all sister Churches,* we learn that he was three days before his death warned in a vision concerning his impending fate, which he immediately communicated to his friends, saying "I shall be burnt alive." We are told that while on his way to the place of execution there came a voice from Heaven, saying, "Be strong and quit thyself like a man Polycarp." This letter, speaking of others who suffered martyrdom at the same time with Polycarp, says, "While they were under torments they were absent from the body, or, rather the Lord Jesus Christ stood by them, and conversed with them, and revealed things to them inconceivable by man, as if they were no longer men but had already become angels."

About the year 150, Justin Martyr, a learned Samaritan who by the study of philosophy had been led to embrace the Christian Faith, testifies in this wise "The prophetic gifts remain with us even to this day, — with us also are to be seen both men and women having gifts from the spirit of God." Athenagorus (178,) in his Apology for the Christians, addressed to the Roman Emperor, thus writes, "I call them prophets, who, being out of themselves and their own thoughts, did utter forth whatsoever by the impelling power of the Spirit he wrought in them; while the Divine operator served himself of them or their organs even as men do of a trumpet, blowing through it. Thus have we prophets for witnesses and affirmers of our faith; and is it not equal and worthy of human reason, O ye emperors, to yield up your faith to the Divine spirit who moves the mouths of the prophets as his instruments?"

Let the reader compare this with what is narrated of the *Sybils*,—the Pythia, —with what has been quoted from Jamblichus,—and with what we know of the speaking media in our own day.

About the year 171, appeared in Phrygia a man of austere habits and severe morality named Montanus, he was not free from extravagancies, but he denounced with boldness the vices and follies of the time, and strove to reform the discipline of the church. He maintained that revelation had not received its full development, that the system which was in its infancy under the law and the Prophets, and in its youth under the Gospel, was to be brought to its maturity by the Paraclete, or Comforter promised by Jesus to his disciples. He was frequently thrown into a state of extasy, in which he gave forth utterances as from a Spirit, which proclaimed itself to be no other than the Paraclete. He had numerous disciples, among whom was the celebrated Tertullian. Wherever a body or church of Montanists existed, there were among its members a greater or less number of these *energumens*, or mediums. An Historian of them relates, that when under this spiritual influence their breasts would heave and swell in a strange manner, and that they constantly averred as well when under the operation of the spirit as out of it, that the organs of their bodies, were by it over-ruled and

* One of the versions of this letter which have come down to us, is accompanied by the following attestation, "This epistle was transcribed by Caius from the copy of Irenæus the disciple of Polycarp, and I Socrates transcribed it at Corinth. After which I, Pionius, wrote it out from the same copy which I found by a revelation wherein Polycarp appeared and directed me to do it, as I have and do attest in the most solemn manner."

their tongues constrained to utter what they did without their own foreknowledge; and whomsoever the agitation seized in their assemblies, whether man or woman, young or old, the person so agitated was not to be restrained. Two ladies of rank and fortune named Maximilla and Priscilla, who shewed the sincerity of their faith by the sacrifices they made for it, were especially distinguished as spiritual seeresses and prophetesses who confirmed the mission of Montanus and taught under the inspiration of the same spirit.

At the latter end of this century, we have the testimony of Irenæus as already quoted.

Early in the third century, Tertullian, in his book concerning the soul, presents us with the following curious passage, "We had a right, after St. John, to expect prophesyings, and we do acknowledge the said spiritual gifts; for there is at this day living among us, a sister who is a partaker of the gift of revelations, which she received under extasy in the spirit in the public congregation; wherein she converses with Angels, sometimes also with the Lord, and sees and hears divine mysteries, and discovers the hearts of some persons, and administers medicine to such as desire it; and when the scriptures are read, or psalms are being sung, or they are preaching, or prayers are being offered up, subjects from thence are ministered in her visions. We had once some discourse touching the soul while this sister was in the spirit. After the public services were over, and most of the people gone, she acquainted us with what she saw, as the custom was; for *these things are heedfully digested that they may be duly proved.* Among other things she then told us that a corporeal soul appeared to her, and the spirit was beheld by her, being of a quality not void and empty, but rather such as might be handled, delicate, and of the colour of light and air, and in all respects bearing the human form."

Here we have an exact counterpart of the spiritual clairvoyants, and of the speaking and healing spiritual media of the present day. Indeed if this passage was quoted without name or date, it might be taken for a description of what is now transpiring, extracted from the Spiritual Telegraph, or some similar source. The description of the "corporeal soul" beheld by this ancient christian seeress, accords with the "Spiritual-body" of St. Paul, the "Nerve-spirit" of the Seeress of Prevorst, the "Spiritual-man" of Swedenborg; the "spiritual-corporeity" of Isaac Taylor, and the "Inner Being" of Davis and other spiritual clairvoyants and media now amongst us. Can this agreement be the result of accidental coincidence; or does it arise from the consistency inherent in genuine outstanding reality.

Tertullian also, (in the style of Elijah challenging the priests of Baal) challenges all Heathendom to a trial with the Christians in open court before their own tribunals to exorcise evil spirits, and to do those things which the christians were able to perform. And St. Cyprian, the pupil of Tertullian, (253) invites Demetrius, Proconsul of Africa, to come and witness how, under the adjuration of Christians, demons were ejected, howling and groaning from the bodies of the obsessed. The same writer testifies that "Even the innocent age of children is filled among us with the Holy Spirit; and they see, and hear, and speak in extasy such things as the Lord vouchsafes to admonish and instruct us by."

Origen, (240) says "There are no more any prophets, nor any miracles among the Jews, of which there are large vestiges found among Christians." Gregory, Bishop of Neo Ceseræ, the pupil of Origen, received by common consent the title of *Thaumaturgus*, or Wonder-worker. The miracles recorded of him by his namesake of Nyssa, were not published till a century after, and therefore may have but little authority, but the appellation bestowed upon him, and this subsequent record of the traditions concerning him, sufficiently indicate the common belief of the christians of that time.

These testimonies could be multiplied, and instances might also be given of many, who about this time were led by spiritual revelations to embrace the Christian Faith. Further, as remarked by a writer in the *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, "we might easily prove by citations from the fathers, that one object of the experiences to which the christian neophyte was subject, was his introduction to a lawful communion with the spirits of the departed." Sufficient however has been already adduced to shew that spiritual manifestations continued and were common through at least the first two and greater part of the third centuries of the christian era.

The authorities above quoted were not unknown men of obscure position, or disreputable character, their names stand bright and foremost in Ecclesiastical History. They proved their sincerity by the perils they braved, and the martyrdom which some of them suffered for their Christian Faith. The facts they attest were not done secretly but performed openly in their assemblies. They speak of them in greater part from the evidence of living witnesses and from their own personal knowledge. They challenge investigation into their truth, and boldly carry their appeal before magistrates and Emperors. And is all this to be set aside by *a priori* reasonings and abstract speculations, by the sneers and calumnies of men who were the bitter assailants of the Christian Faith; or, because in common with the age in which they lived, they entertained upon other subjects erroneous opinions and modes of reasoning: or, because they accepted and related as facts some things which a closer scrutiny has shown to be probably unfounded? Are we upon these and like grounds, to record our verdict against them as false witnesses, attesting the reality of fables and lies? Let all the objections that have been urged be put in the opposite scale against their successive and concurrent testimony, and if we hold the balance fairly it will not kick the beam.

We have only to add, that the same authorities testify that spiritual manifestations were not confined to the Christian church, though they may have been displayed there in greater fulness and power. Dr. Middleton, tells us that it is constantly affirmed by the primitive christian writers and apologists, "that there were a number of Magicians, Necromancers, or Conjurors, both among the Gentiles and the Heretical Christians who had each their particular Demons, or evil Spirits for their associates, perpetually attending on their persons, and obsequious to their commands; by whose help they could perform miracles, foretell future events, call up the souls of the dead, exhibit them to open view, and infuse into people whatever dreams or visions they thought fit." In confirmation of this, we may quote Athenagoras in the second century, who writes "We do not deny

that in different places, cities, and countries, there are some extraordinary works performed in the name of idols; from which some have received benefit others harm." Origen, in the third century, allows the prediction of future events and the cure of diseases among the Heathen by the aid of Demons, but challenges the proof that those who thus cure and foretel are not bad, but good, and worthy to be held in a manner as Gods. And Lactantius in the fourth century, speaking of certain Philosophers, who held, that the soul perished with the body, says, "They durst not have declared such an opinion, in the presence of any Magician, or if they had done it, he would have confuted them upon the spot, by sensible experiments; by calling up souls from the dead, and rendering them visible to human eyes, and making them speak and foretel future events."

AMERICA:

(From our own Correspondent.)

The British Spiritual Telegraph, Prejudice, Spiritualism in the United States, its Literature; Test Examination before the Massachusetts Legislature.

Your publication "*The British Spiritual Telegraph*" is received regularly and read with interest; from this I gather that the work goes slowly yet surely on; bigotry, prejudice, the love of "time honoured institutions," and your national dislike for "new lights" "new fangled notions," will delay tho' not *prevent*, the progress of Spiritualism, the truth of which is now demonstrated here by millions of well attested facts—the "chiels that winna ding." Scarcely ten years have elapsed since it was cradled in New York, yet it now numbers over three million believers, a number equal to the *united members of all the thirty thousand American churches*; far outstripping the conquests of Lutheranism or Methodism in their Augustan periods. Though the large majority of believers yet remain within the pale of the churches, it is estimated that 500,000 listen every Sunday to the *living* inspirations of our trance speakers. The largest halls in the largest cities are required to accommodate the hearers, and in many instances, when such speakers as Mrs. Cora Hatch, Mrs. Henderson, or your own country-woman, Miss Emma Hardinge, are present, hundreds go away unable to obtain seats; this also in spite of much sectarian opposition and prejudice (a necessary attendant on the spread of all truth.)

The literature of Spiritualism is already great and constantly increasing. Mr. Partridge's published list comprises nearly one hundred volumes, which will compare favourably with the publications of any other denomination.

There are upwards of twenty papers and periodicals devoted to the cause,—among the most popular may be mentioned

The Spiritual Telegraph, by CHAS. PARTRIDGE, New York,
The Spiritual Age, by NEWTON & BRITTAN, Boston, Mass.,
The Banner of Light, by L. COLBY & Co., Boston, Mass.,
The Spiritual Clarion, by U. CLARK, Auburn, New York,
Tiffany's Monthly, by JOEL TIFFANY, New York,

the latter is a periodical of rare ability and literary excellence.

An interesting investigation of the phenomena of Spiritualism took place a few weeks ago in Boston. Dr. Gardener, a gentleman who has identified himself prominently with the cause, invited the Governor, Council, and Legislature of Massachusetts to a public examination of its claims. The affair came off in the Melodeon, Boston, before one of the largest and most intelligent audiences of our modern Athens. The medium was Mrs. Ada Coan. A Committee was formed consisting of several members of the Legislature—upwards of thirty intelligent tests of spiritual presence were given. At the close, the committee declared their belief that the demonstrations were conducted in the fairest possible manner, there being neither collusion nor fraud; every individual must satisfy himself as to the origin of the phenomena. When will the British Cabinet and House of Commons consent to a like public examination of this most marvellous discovery of modern times?

MELANCTHON.

EXTENSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

One of our London correspondents informs us that he was recently at an evening party, at the house of a literary gentleman, to which none but Spiritualists were invited—most of them mediums. The interest of the evening centred itself in the inspection of a considerable collection of Spirit drawings of marvellous art, some through the hand of a most remarkable medium in London; the remainder through the hands of the members of a family well known in the literary world.

There were nearly fifty present, all having wonders to relate, if not to exhibit.

WHAT "PHILOSOPHY" SAYS ABOUT SPIRITUALISM.

The *Asylum Journal of Mental Science*, the organ of an association of physicians who make a speciality of the treatment of the Insane, in a review of Dr. Garth Wilkinson's Tract on *The Homœopathic Principle applied to Insanity*, takes hold of the general question of Spiritualism, and gives it, as the reviewer seems to flatter himself, a rather rough handling.

It is scarcely necessary to go into the details of this critique: the reviewer only recapitulates the conclusions of the smarter writer of the *Westminster Review* of last quarter; and he merely retailed the better expressed notions of Rogers of America, who, in his turn, has been over and over again, shown not to have touched the heart of the subject.

It is good for the question to be ventilated in new quarters, however superficial and illogical the ventilators may be. Were it not for such ventilation, we of this publication, for instance, would scarcely have known several things,—to wit:—

1st. That a volume on Spiritualism was published last January by Chapman & Hall, entitled "*Spirit Drawings; a personal narrative, by W. M. Wilkinson.*"

2nd. That "it is a fact that in several literary circles in London, Spiritualism, as carried to its fullest extent, is a subject of much study and some belief; and that it is no secret that the medium Home is at this very time retained at the Tuileries, and is said to be making a convert of the French Emperor."

3rd. That "the English Correspondent of the *New York Spiritual Telegraph*, which has gone through six volumes," is our excellent friend Mr. J. Jones of Peckham.

4th. That the reviewer, "would like to see these Spirit manifestations, and that if Mr. Jones, will favour him with an invitation to his circle he will faithfully report the result of his visit."

Now all these things we are glad to learn from this review, and there is very little else to learn from it. The subject, however, does not seem to be exhausted with the reviewer, for he says, "when they [mediums,] involuntarily write thoughts and facts which are not in harmony with their previous mental state, and of which they could not otherwise be cognisant, they may again plead their cause before the bar of philosophy." So we may consider the case as not entirely disposed of, and that Spiritualism may be favoured by philosophy with one hearing more! Our philosophers do not seem to be aware that Spiritualism, in its turn, is sitting in judgment on their "philosophy."

The reviewer is notable to account for the Spiritual writings except by regarding them "as spontaneous sallies of fancy." This hypothesis is more like a "sally of fancy" than any spirit-writing we have yet seen.

Quoting from Mr. Rymer's pamphlet the reviewer says he does not believe the facts there stated, but has asked Mr. R. to give him the opportunity of being convinced: in the meantime he commends to his attention "*Pratt's Mechanical Philosophy*," and, says the classically taught reviewer, "He may perchance, should his study prosper, catch also a sense of the pitying scorn with which those nurtured in the strong meat of the inductive philosophy, within the very courts and halls that Newton trod, view these sickly Spiritualist dreamers, thus drunk with the new wine of folly and credulity." By this piece of fine writing we gather that the reviewer, whose name is at the end of his paper and whose address is on the cover of the Journal, did "at a Cambridge College pluck the tree of knowledge." The superciliousness of the reviewer may be classically expressed and Cantabriensic, but it is not Newtonic: treading the Newtonian "courts and halls" does not involve donning the Newtonian mantle. Well, well, we hope that by one or the other—Mr Rymer or Mr. Jones—he may be invited and that he may be ultimately "convinced" that there are facts in relation to man which he has yet to learn, and which as facts come within the domain of the inductive philosophy, although they are by him, at present, regarded as *philosophical impossibilities*.

Another organ of the "big world" that notices the subject, is the *Journal of Health*, one of whose objects is, according to the title page, to *illustrate the truths of mental philosophy*.

The editor of the last named publication says that he has at length resolved to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism from some facts having come to his knowledge as to its practical utility in bringing many to become *sober, thinking, and enquiring*. He quotes an article from these pages which he regards not only as curious but as of a *practically useful* tendency. He says he shall judge for himself and not conclude from the judgment of others.

We think it would be well if the reviewer in the Asylum Journal,—if, indeed, he be not disabled by too close an approximation to his patients,—were to defer writing oracularly again upon the subject until after following the example of the editor of the *Journal of Health*.

D.

DISCUSSIONS ON SPIRITUALISM.

According to promise, I report the result of the enquiry by the committee of gentlemen in the Temple. They went two by two to the house of the medium who had been introduced by Mr. S. Owen, and in due time communicated to the open air meeting at King's Cross the conclusions they had severally come to. All agreed that the singular phenomena were not the effect of design on the part of the medium or others, but all except one seemed to see insuperable difficul-

ties against assigning them to the part-agency of disembodied spirits; the generally entertained opinion was that the phenomena were attributable to some unconscious action on the part of the medium or of the person asking the question.

Mr. Owen, who continues to attend, every Sunday afternoon, the open air meeting at King's Cross, invited the committee and the meeting generally to come to his lecture at Chenies Street. Many have availed themselves of the invitation; among whom is a Mr. Robinson, who has for years occupied a prominent position in those open air discussions. Mr. Robinson at the commencement thought the secret might be found out by close watching: but at the second lecture, some mediums taking a seat at a table in an upper apartment, the meeting appointed a committee to inspect and report: Mr. R. was one of the committee and he agreed with the rest as to the phenomena not being attributable to the mediums' conscious action. He is now, with others who feel a new interest in this enquiry, endeavouring to find out to what mundane causes they can be attributed.

The audience at Mr. Owen's lectures steadily gathers in strength, and shows an increasing good feeling, of which they have given evidence in various ways.

Mr. Owen has had some circle sittings at his own apartments, Mrs. Marshall the medium, at one of which some excellent tests were given. Through the raps it was represented that the father of one of the circle was present. The gentleman's father had been a great amateur sportsman: the spirit, through the raps, answered the following questions correctly:—

"What was my mother's christian name?"

"What was the name of your horse that's preserved at the Veterinary College?"

"And that of your favorite hound?"

"What is the name on your fowling piece?"

"And the makers name on your watch?"

About a score of other questions were put besides these; the great majority were correctly answered, but it has to be said that the gentleman was not convinced that he himself had not furnished the answers in some mysterious way. Mr. Owen suggested that if that were the case *all* the answers should have been equally correct. There was a lady present equally non-receptive to the notion of a disembodied spirit being capable of acting in any such way as producing detonations on a table, although the evidence seemed to others conclusive; thus,—it having been stated, through the raps that Mrs. V.'s mother was present, the Spirit was asked, as a test, to indicate Mrs. V.'s christian name. A number of names were written down on paper, among which Mrs. V. said one was hers; these names were copied on to as many small slips and rolled into balls and shaken together: then they were dropped one by one on the table with the request that when the ball fell, on which Mrs. V.'s name was written, the spirit would rap: the ball was separated from the rest when raps came. Mr. O. then made a similar request that the raps should be heard on his coming to the same name in his written list; comparison was made when the raps came, and the name was the same on the list as on the slip when opened. Mrs. V. confessed that it was the right name, but she "could not think it was spiritual intelligence." So difficult it is for some to receive a new impression!

The few friends who back Mr. S. Owen in his lecturing movement were induced to do so by the favorable reception he met with on giving two lectures on the subject of Spiritualism at the Pimlico Literary, Scientific, and Mechanics' Institution. These friends have formed themselves into a committee for advancing the cause and invite co-operation: on Sundays at 3 p. m. the committee, meet for the present, at 25, Bedford Row, to confer together, and will be happy for others to join them. To ensure a *permanent* movement in London, little more is required than *personal co-operation*.

To our friends in the country we can already say—*Go and do likewise.*

LONDON.

J. D.

P. S. At the close of one of the Lectures, a man with a withered powerless arm, asked if the Spirits could do anything for him: he bared the arm before the audience, and Mr. Owen having manipulated it for a short time, the man was enabled to raise his hand to his face, a thing he declared to his delight — reciprocated by the audience — he had not been able to do for several years before.

Another thing made some sensation. Some experiments were being made with a table upstairs, and one of the investigating committee, struggling against the force exerted by the unseen agents, the medium being a young woman lightly keeping her hands on it, the table went to pieces.

(May 11th.) Last night's Lecture was given by our friend Mr. John Jones of Peckham, Mr. S. Owen being prevented by professional engagements from continuing the series. Mr. Jones was most successful in engaging the attention of the audience, which has steadily grown in numbers and in respectful demeanour. At the conclusion a vote of thanks was warmly proposed by one of the audience and was unanimously agreed to.

At the close of his lecture Mr. Jones made a liberal distribution of his last excellent tract, headed Spirit-Power, No. II., reprinted from No. 7 of the *B. S. Telegraph*.

SPIRIT POWER CIRCLES, COMMUNICATIONS &c.

LONDON.

I am glad to inform you that a meeting of Spiritualists has been held at 25, Bedford Row, to consider the best means to be adopted for combining the hitherto scattered friends of the cause in London, into a society. And I will take this opportunity of observing that I constantly regret your useful and interesting little Periodical should be paralysed as it were by a monthly instead of a *Weekly* issue: for I am confident that much useful information and many interesting Facts are kept back, by those who would otherwise send an account of them, from a feeling of the want of space. I would therefore urge all those interested in the Cause to take this also into consideration.

I herewith send you two more Communications written through the hand of the same medium as the one contained in your April No., signed "Phreno," should you have space and consider them worth inserting.

H. B.

"My beloved Children, you must search the scriptures, for in them are contained all that will make you as God's own, knowing good and evil. (The Scriptures are not exclusively the Bible, or Testament; but *God's Universe*.) Study all you can to improve yourselves, for you will then be able to instruct others in many things that appertain to the necessary knowledge which will lead them to a proper state of reflection and study; for therein will they find all the blessings God their great Creator as given man to know, and knowing, to practice. True science is the working of God's will, and is necessarily laying that foundation for the future elevation of the mind of man and the destruction of all that keeps him in bondage to his fellows, and in a low physical condition. Science or Truth, will elevate and bring forth all his high functions and great faculties of body and mind and make him all that has been spoken of him 'Little less than the Angels.'"

(April 30th, 1858.) "My Children, go on with your studies and you will receive aid from time to time, for you are capable of almost infinite intellectual and Spiritual development. You can already yet glimpses of that eternal infinite power and goodness manifested in all things around you, and as you proceed in your onward course, you will discover more and more of the beauty and excellence, of the knowledge and goodness, displayed in the works of God, for you have much to

learn and you can excel, if you study His works, in all their infinite variety: it will exercise your talents and improve your nature, and thus render you fit to instruct others. There is enough in the unseen to supply all your wants; and whatever aid you may require you will obtain it, if you only adopt the means that have been already pointed out to you, namely, 'Search and you shall find.'

Knowledge does not come to Man: Man must go to Knowledge: he must enquire, examine, and search; he will then most assuredly find, even more than he seeks for. It is impossible for any one at present to conceive what God has laid up in store for those who love to search for knowledge; its elevating, and love giving character blesses you with the feelings of Charity for all the human race: it enables you to see the improper and untoward means that have been used to lead mankind into bad, instead of good habits. The Priesthood have veiled these great and glorious Truths, by the mystery they have hitherto thrown around them; they have first deluded themselves, and then their hearers.

By pursuing the same path which leads to Science, you will also be able to gain a knowledge of Spiritual things; and you will succeed as well as the scientific man; and further, it will give you the same solid basis, and satisfaction in all that appertains to the future development of the inner man. There is more in, and around you, than you are aware of, to instruct and lead you on to the investigation of Spiritual Truths. Search then my Children! for mind-development is of all things most humbling to man's self-knowledge, as it is called by you, but it is only self-conceit; for true knowledge not only blesses, in making you humble, but it gives you a stimulating power to advance onward and upward. How devoted to their studies, are the few among you who are termed Scientific men; how blest they are in their lives: see what a blessing they are to others, by teaching mankind the great Truths they have discovered. My Children, the principles of Science have hitherto aided you to discover only a few of the operations of Nature; all causes both great and small, are regulated by some such laws or principles as have been at present discovered. Man might make your earth much more beautiful, when he has progressed in knowledge; for the knowledge of preserving, and distributing the productions of the earth, is as necessary for his advancement and real happiness as the production of them. Behold! what a glorious Future there is for the human race. Go on then and all will be as easy and felicitous as you could desire, for you will not tire in the search. For this Light of Life will illumine your soul and make you blessed. PHRENO.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY "SINCERITAS."

Question.—It is difficult to convince pious people that it is *not* presumptuous to seek counsel from spirits. They hold that we ought to be satisfied with God's written word and with the secret influence of the Holy Spirit. How can their objections be met?

Answer.—We Spirits declare that the written word of God, is decidedly sufficient for mankind; and that, altho' spirits might revisit earthly kindred to comfort and soothe them by their influence, they would have no need to teach them did the children of God follow practically the Laws of the Scriptures. But it is in consequence of the bigotry, deceitfulness, and treachery of men that we are permitted boldly to come forward as the messengers of God to bid them remember that they *have* His Word and ought to know and do His Will.

If you say that christian people do not need this call, I tell you that there is a larger amount of sin and hypocrisy existing amongst religionists, as a mass, than with all the unbelievers of God's holy word, and few indeed are they who, while they profess to be following Christ, do as He did; in their hearts, at least, they would punish and curse the erring and the guilty; they will shew but little mercy even to those who merely differ from them in opinions.

Alas! it is too true, that the majority of professing christians (especially those

who cry out "it is blasphemy and wickedness to hold intercourse with spirits") are those who profess faith, but have no works. And I also declare that those who have, without pomp or show or pharisaical signs, searched the Scriptures, will find that the spirits, who now visit the Earth, are but the successors of those who have travelled upward into the higher mansions of the Father's Kingdom.

But the truth is: God's word is not comprehended and consequently it is mangled and disfigured by every different sect. PHRENO.

Question.—Are we to expect the fulfilment of Joel ii. 23 through the present, "Spirit Manifestations" or at some future time in some other way?

Answer.—The fulfilment of the promise Joel ii. 28 has commenced in this your day. Men now, through these manifestations, will begin truly to seek and to know the Lord God, and also to know themselves. The word of God shall be restored, and the errors and alterations which have crept in from generation to generation shall be cast out, and the lamp of Christian knowledge shall be lighted by the power of God; and mankind shall become, not mere professing Christians, but as knowing the will of God and also doing it. Yes this is the commencement, for these truths shall grow and by them shall the time come when "All men shall know the Lord." PHRENO.

Question.—Is there anything that man can do to render himself more susceptible to spirit influence or towards his becoming a "Medium."

Answer.—No, nothing more can be done than continual faith and prayer to God combined with a life of industry in *searching the Scriptures* and endeavouring daily to become enlightened upon the mysterious passages contained in them; the high and lofty spirits are drawn to such and as they become more enlightened and more pure, so do they the more attract the good spirits to them, who as the power is given to them, gradually unfold greater wonders and more perfect light to the enquiring mind.

Hence as those in the flesh become spiritually minded, so does their power of spiritual vision increase and the time will come when mankind, dwelling in love and unity, will love each other and with the light of truth shining in their minds they will then mourn only for the errors of your day. PHRENO.

Question.—How are the words to be reconciled that "God willeth all men to be saved" I Tim. ii. 4. with our Saviour's words "Many are called but few are chosen."

Answer.—You may reconcile them in this way, that in consequence of the will of God, that all men should be saved, all indeed are called, but, because of the perverseness and hardness of men's heart, few are chosen as messengers or friends of Christ.

A true Spiritualist, as he becomes enlightened concerning the mysteries of the inner life, will better understand this passage than those whom I may call *materialistic* Christians. We cannot tell how many will be chosen at the last great day, neither men, nor spirits, nor angels, for God has not revealed it. But we spirits believing that He is alike the God and Father of all, know that He will deal to all men according to His loving-kindness and that he will punish none for committing those evils in the flesh, which perchance he was pressed or almost forced to commit, in consequence of the evils which surrounded him. But for all such impurities we know there is a provision made by the "God of love" in the middle or intermediate states, which are the different spheres of the Spirit-world or the, "land of eternal progression." PHRENO.

QUEENSHED.

Sir,

Once I was a sceptic, but now I am convinced, and am very glad that ever I had an opportunity of witnessing those wonderful attestations of Spirit power, and I will, as far as my own personal experience goes, afford you my sincere tes-

timony. And now let me endeavour, as well as I possibly can, to explain to you the reason why I was so sceptical, and how I became convinced.

In the first place, it was unpopular in the extreme; nay even at present, if a person be known, at least in our neighbourhood, to believe in, or to have anything to do with, "Table Knocking," (as they term) it, in any shape or form whatsoever, he is set down for one that has dealings with the devil, and is taunted and laughed at by nearly the whole neighbourhood. — In the second place, my scepticism was strengthened, simply because no such phenomena occurred to me.

It is now about 9 months since I was first introduced to this new gospel by a friend of mine, who, like myself, was very sceptical, though he had on several occasions, witnessed these things; but after all he was afraid to believe his own eyes.

The time appointed for our first meeting was one Sunday night, about 7 o'clock when me, my friend and two others placed our hands on the table as directed by our more advanced friends of the Circle. All remained silent for about 20 minutes when the table began to move gently towards me, and immediately I was declared to be the medium, which statement was confirmed by the tipplings of the table. On hearing this, my mind became confused, in fact I was altogether lost; but on resuming my presence of mind, I began to suspicion very strongly that this was a hoax by some one sat at the table. In order to convince me, they each took off their hands one after another until I had it entirely to myself, then several other questions were asked, but not being answered satisfactorily, I still continued to doubt whether or no there was any supernatural agency connected therewith: I could not, however, conscientiously say that there was nothing in "Table Moving" as I had had it entirely to myself, but like hundreds of other very would-be-wise people, I attributed it to some kind of electricity or magnetism. Thus endeth my description of our first sitting.

If the above is not so grammatically arranged as it should be, I can only add that I have done my best; and as it is the first paragraph I ever wrote for the press, I trust you will sympathise with me a little. I have confined myself to what happened at our first attempt and the impressions produced on my own mind, but in my next I will begin to include some of the communications received.

E. SHACKLETON.

KEIGHLEY.

The following question was submitted to the spirit of A. Combe by a member of the "Original Circle:"—"Are there any Manifestations taking place in the Spirit-World, and if so, how will they affect the inhabitants of this earth?"

"I shall offer but very few remarks on the subject, as I do not consider myself fully competent for such an important task, and the more so, because our friend Swedenborg would gladly embrace an opportunity of treating that subject in a more comprehensive, though extensive manner. His silence is caused through the want of more perfect media. We have greater difficulties of this kind than will at first sight appear.

In speaking of the manifestations which are taking place in our spheres, I shall find it difficult to give you an idea of the various developments that are taking place and their effects upon your own globe.

Life is an active principle, whether clogged by an earth-covering or in that spiritual body which is durable in its nature and fitted for its state through time. There is no stationary epoch through which we have to pass. Our progress may be slow, or may be that we are retrograding; but to stand still is impossible. And now let me use a figure to illustrate the condition of mortals in the flesh which we shall afterwards find to be appropriate to the state of those who have left their earth-covering.

Suppose a body of men to be in search of some particular spot upon earth, but being proud of their attainments in geographical sciences they determine to be guided by their own wisdom, which, alas, is but a dim light for weary travelers, or a dangerous helmsman for a ship whose pilot hath been turned adrift; yet in the foregoing, you have but too true a picture of men on earth as well as spirits in the spirit-world. You have each a desire to find that lovely spot where happiness reigns triumphant, where trials shall never molest you; but the knowledge of those who inhabit these states, has been spurned, your own selfishness increased, and yourselves hurried headlong into a contrary course.

When men have realized their fill of selfishness and discovered their own weakness, then, and only then will they consent to listen to the dictates of higher intelligences than themselves. So it is with us in the Spirit-world. You will now be better able to understand what I meant by the spirit of man not being stationary, and how I shall endeavour to account for the events that either have already taken place or may hereafter come to pass.

[The next sentence seems to be of a desultory nature, and yet so intimately connected with what follows as to make it incomplete if omitted. It runs thus:—"If it be in accordance with your desires, I will, for the remainder of my observations, consult your friend Swedenborg; in which case I must beg the indulgence of your Circle for a time. Oblige me by reading over the communication before you part and also at our next meeting." This was done, but from what follows it appears that the spirit of Combe could not comprehend Swedenborg's ideas on this subject. He continued:—]

"As I am not prepared to subscribe to the whole of friend Swedenborg's views on this subject, I prefer to give you my own; though you are not to infer that I do this with a knowledge of any defect in what he is ready to put forth: my reason, is, that I cannot clearly fathom what he advances.

To return to my subject:—Life is an active principle; Spirits in these states do but live out the life they commenced on earth, as it is but too common for man in his selfish state, to pursue a course at variance with his true happiness, and he too strongly represents the figure used in my prefatory remarks, in which case each spirit can only learn wisdom when sorrow reveals their folly.

This contempt for succour, this desire for independence, hath too frequently caused such an amount of suffering, as the finite powers of mortals cannot depict, by a course of alienation from the paths of virtue, which alone are capable of yielding peace.

But what is the condition of him who discovers his error in his ideal of happiness? See his wild gaze and phrenzied gait! Behold him start in vigour to retrace his steps! View him in the newness of energy, how he sympathises with those, who, like himself, are hurrying to destruction! His looks, his language and all his powers pourtray the awful state he is emerging from; while his deep sympathetic emotions, arrests the attention of all bystanders.

Such are the impressions while mankind are in the normal state; but when once they escape from the paths of duty, their tastes and feelings become polluted and all the sympathising forms of humanity are powerless in their appeals to man. In this awful wretched state, men have poured into the spirit-world: and as men's actions are governed by internal or spiritual operations, so are all movements of great import dependant for guidance on this controlling power; and as I have already intimated that mankind must first live out their affections either in their upward or downward course, and as each man is in pursuit of happiness and the downward course is productive of grief only; so the time necessarily arrives when an eventful epoch, known as a turning point comes to pass: then the efforts of the unfortunate wanderers become powerful indeed, and are not confined to the Spirit-world alone, but their influence is felt by the inhabitants of your earth. It is one of those partial, or, perhaps more correctly speak-

ing, a particular epoch in the world's history. And here let me explain the difference between a partial and a particular epoch. When you hear of a small outburst in a religious or political society, be assured that some spirit or spirits who have been successful in leading them, has discovered cause to change their course, which is immediately reflected on those subject to their influence: hence it is partial, and not like one of those more genial outbursts which affect so large a portion of the human family and which I call a particular epoch — the like of which rarely occurs, but which must be conceded, is apparent at this time.

This particular outburst is gnawing the vitals of deep-rooted materialism, scattering to the four winds the varied masks of hypocrisy, thereby preparing the way for the realization of the poets song and the philosophers dream: do not however suppose that all evil is just ready to terminate. The change will be great, but finite. It is a change in our sphere; but through being reflected upon your earth, it operates on man, causing foolish dreams, and false doctrine to become easily traceable to an evil origin; and in proportion to capacity and influence of those acted upon, will it depend for the extent of our mission upon earth.

The seeds of evil are like the oak; they are deep-rooted and nothing short of the interference of the Almighty through spirit agency can possibly effect any great or lasting change.

Thus it is with the probable effects of the present manifestations in the Spirit world and their influence on mankind.

If in these few observations I have been able to convey to you some useful thought which shall bring you into open action in the great drama of life, our time will not have been misspent; or if there be any further information that I can possibly afford, I shall be happy to supply it."

REMARKS ON H. B's. SUGGESTIONS.

[Our esteemed correspondent is correct in stating that there is a "want of space" to record "much useful information and many interesting Facts," and we, too, ask the attention of "all those interested in the cause." Hitherto we have used our humble efforts to keep in existence, at least, a monthly Record, and purpose continuing so to do. It may however be well to remark that it is the opinion of some who are zealous in the cause, that London is the proper place to issue a *Weekly*, and if such be the general opinion, we are not troubled with that ambition which will lead us to be an hindrance to the most effectual way of collecting the scattered fragments of Spiritual truths and feeding the multitudes who lack those necessities. When we enlisted, we had but one end in view, viz. to enhance the glorious truth of the reality of Spirit-intercourse. If a *Weekly* paper can be got up more effectually by others who are able and willing to take the trouble and expence, we again repeat, we will not be an hindrance; — our object will be achieved. Ed.]

SPIRITUALIST UNION.

At a meeting of some of the known advocates of the cause of Spiritualism in London, held on the 16th May, at Mr. Dixon's, it was resolved:—"That a union of Spiritualists be formed, on an unsectarian basis, under the above title, and with these objects,—1st. To encourage interchange of thought and experience; 2nd. to act upon public opinion in the advocacy and defence of their principles; and 3rd. to cultivate their application to individual and social life.

"That the means for carrying out these objects shall be friendly re-unions, conferences, lectures, tracts, &c.; by aiding in the formation of circles for investigation; and by such other means as may be determined on from time to time.

"That to meet unavoidable incidental expences, each member pay an annual *minimum* subscription of Five Shillings."

Those friends who wish to be useful in practical work in the spirit of these resolutions are requested by letter or personally to apply to the Sec. *Pro. Tem.*

J. DIXON.

25, BEDFORD ROW, LONDON. W. C.

A NEW AND IMPORTANT ARRANGEMENT.—Our readers will be pleased to see that we have a "correspondent" on the other side of the Atlantic who will keep us apprised of matters there. He is an Englishman, and of his suitable abilities for so desirable a work, we will leave his labours to speak for themselves.

As Dr. Dods is regarded, by many persons in England, as worthy of confidence, and, we have published the extraordinary cure effected in Provincetown, through spirit agency, as revealed to himself, and we have had the misfortune to allow two papers, containing more particulars, to go on a visit, we would thank our correspondent if he can furnish the date and place.

HALIFAX LECTURE. In consequence of several enquiries respecting the result of our labours on that occasion, we propose to publish our reply to the Rev. gentleman's discourse, to be ready on the 12th of June. It will contain an amount of Biblical evidence in favour of Spiritualism, and also our view of the passages quoted against us.

It will be adapted for being bound with the Telegraph. Six copies will be sent post free on receipt of six postage stamps.

The audience, on the above occasion, was estimated by several at 2,000.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS.—In our last we referred to the zeal of a subscriber, aged 67; we are again tempted to notice another mark of his indefatigable exertions. Since the commencement of the present Vol. he has obtained 4 additional subscribers; another who feels an interest in the cause has ordered 20 copies during the past month, having obtained near that number of subscribers: on the whole we have to report 27 new subscribers, besides orders for extra copies. If each subscriber could copy the example of the above, we might hope that the day would not be far distant when the *Telegraph* would be considerably enlarged without any additional cost to the subscribers.

P. S. Since the above was in type we have received an order for 12 more copies from the Secretary to "The Spiritual Harmonium" at the class Rooms, 101, High St. Hoxton. The order is accompanied by an address, which shall appear in our next, together with a copy of Rules. The principles upon which the "Spiritual Harmonium Society" seem to be based, will, we think, coincide with those of the "Spiritualistic Union" and "Spiritualist Union" and several others who are alike anxious for a useful organization. A conference seems almost indispensable to arrange those matters, and, by publishing the address and Rules of the Spiritual Harmonium, it will enable circles to consider the matter, preparatory to such a gathering.

RECEIVED. "Partridge's Spiritual Telegraph," "The Spiritual Age," "The Banner of Light," "The Practical Christian," "Revue Spiritualiste;" (a French publication, published in Paris,) Letter to Mr. S. Owen, "The Spirits admonition;" Mr. T. Duffill,—his kind order shall be attended too.

THE YORKSHIRE SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, Vol. I. 1s. 6d., Vol. II & III, 1s each, Vol. IV, 1s 4d.

THE BRITISH SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH. Vol. I. One Shilling.

Just published, price, One Shilling.

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